

Annual Report for the year 1896

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The past year of 1896 is the first entire year of the Urban Authority of Ashton-on-Mersey, but as information was obtained from the Rural Authority of Altrincham as to the earlier part of 1895, I am now able to make a comparison between the years of 1895 and 1896.

The year 1896 has been a healthy one. We have been troubled with no epidemic. There have been fourteen cases of scarlet fever, this has been sporadic, and seems to have been wind carried, as there is no evidence in most of the cases, of contagion. There have been three cases of typhoid fever, two of erysipelas and three of diphtheria; as to the number of cases, one less in the past year as compared with the previous one, but as to the death rate of zymotic disease, only 0.8 in comparison with 1.6 taking the population as last year of 5,000 but only 0.7 as taking it at 5,200 as it now is, ~~and of~~ *but in numbers all* these deaths ~~they~~ *all* arise from diarrhoea, ~~from~~ *in numbers*.

The chief cause of death in this Authority is from lung trouble, and this is common to the whole of England, chiefly owing to the changeable weather, especially in the winter quarter. In valleys open to the sea, the illness is chiefly of the respiratory organs, in cross valleys, rheumatism and heart disease. The population at the Census in 1891 was 4,234, in 1895 it was taken at 5,000, now it is 5,200.

Taking 5,000 population the death rate is 11.4 as compared with 13.8 of last year, if the population be considered 5,200 the death rate is slightly lower - 10.9; so also the birth rate per 5,000 during 1895,



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was 25.4, in 1896 23.4, slightly less or taking it on 5,200 - 22.5.

Deaths under one year, 119 to 1,000 living ^{births} ~~persons~~, against 133 last year, a great improvement.

The total births for 1896 are 117, against 127 in 1895.

Total number of deaths 57 against 69 - one stranger. Four from Ashton have died at Knutsford.

Phthisis is responsible for 6 deaths. Pneumonia and bronchitis 8 deaths.

Great care has been taken to prevent the spread of infectious disease and at the present time the Authority is free from such.

Sixty five special inspections have been made, many at the request of the inhabitants and advice given.

The manholes to the Sewers are regularly inspected and are working well. The Sewer from Albany terrace has been attended to, but the Barrow brook, Cross Street, wants considerable cleaning, so as to let the water run freely - the neighbourhood may at any time suffer in consequence of the stagnant and polluted state of its contents.

During the past year, fifty new houses have been built and care has been taken in each case that the hygienic arrangements are attended to.

The North Cheshire water supplied to the township is excellent in quality. *but insufficient in quantity for public purposes*

The willow beds, where the sewage is treated continue to act in an efficient way, the effluent water being of very good quality.

The addition to the burial ground of Ashton-on-Mersey has been made and the Rev. Mr. Hertzberg intends opening it in spring, owing to the old churchyard being full and closed by Act of Parliament the matter of interment has been of considerable trouble to those living in Ashton, but not possessing graves.

The annual incidence of the Wakes held in the first week of November is a source of danger to the community and anxiety to your Medical Officer, the vans are clean and the health accommodation for their inhabitants is sufficient, but the congregation of so many people from so many different centres is conducive to the spread of disease; this year we had scarlet fever and diphtheria immediately afterwards, last year we had an epidemic of measles and the year before a spread of scarlet fever.

During the past year, the County Council have called the attention of the Authority to the advisability of erecting an hospital for infectious diseases, at their suggestion a Provisional Order has been applied for and if granted, about which there is no doubt, your serious consideration will have to be given both as to the locality and the size of the hospital, of course it is proposed that other neighbouring Authorities should join as a hospital district and authority, probably the order will be in your hands as granted about June, you will then have to elect representatives.

I believe if the Authorities along the river who have sewage farms could be induced to plant between them and us, pines, poplars and willows, much of the annoyance caused by bad smells coming from the northern direction during a north east wind, would be obviated. The cost would be very small and the timber in a little while would recoup the

expense.
Endorse

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The question of cholera does not
come within this report; but as
cholera is stated now to be affecting
some persons on board a vessel
arriving from the bringing home
soldiers from India, who are
supposed to have become ill
through eating fruit brought
from India. I would suggest,
to all, that imported fruit
from abroad should either
be cooked or peeled before
it is eaten. As cholera now
is supposed to be taken only
through the mouth. I do
not think there is any probability
of the spread of cholera in
England.